

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6451
INFO AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMCONSUL MONTREAL
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY DAKAR

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, CA
SUBJECT: DAKAR: OTTAWA VS QUEBEC CITY

REF: QUEBEC 57

1. FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF STORY IN LE DEVOIR (REFTEL),
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DECIDED TO ISSUE COMMUNIQUE
TO EXPLAIN ITS REASON FOR REFUSING PERMISSION TO QUEBEC
TO OPEN DELEGATION GENERAL IN DAKAR. ACCORDING TO THIS
COMMUNIQUE DATED FEBRUARY 21, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
ACCEPTS IN PRINCIPLE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROVINCIAL
OFFICES ABROAD, BUT BELIEVES "THE ACTIVITIES ENVISAGED
FOR THE (QUEBEC) DELEGATION (IN DAKAR) WOULD OVERLAP IM-
PORTANT FIELDS OF ACTIVITY OF THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN
SENEGAL, PARTICULARLY IN THE FIELD OF AID WHICH IS AN
ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF CANADIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN AFRICA."
THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO STATED THAT, IN A LETTER DATED
FEBRUARY 15, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER JAMIESON INFORMED
CLAUDE MORIN, QUEBEC MINISTER OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL
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AFFAIRS, THAT "AT THIS STAGE THE MEANS OF SATISFYING THE
DIFFERING INTERESTS IN PLAY WOULD BE BY MEANS OF A
QUEBEC GOVERNMENT PRESENCE IN THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN
DAKAR." JAMIESON CONCLUDED HIS LETTER BY PROPOSING
"OFFICIAL LEVEL DISCUSSIONS IN QUEBEC OR IN OTTAWA IN THE
NEAR FUTURE."

2. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ON THIS SUBJECT AT A PRESS CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 23, TRUDEAU MADE THE FOLLOWING COMMENT: "WE HAVE NOT BEEN SHOWN EITHER BY THE SENEGALESE GOVERNMENT OR BY THE QUEBEC GOVERNMENT THAT IT WAS NEEDED FOR ANY OF THE AREAS THAT QUEBEC GENERALLY USES TO JUSTIFY DELEGATIONS IN ANOTHER COUNTRY. YOU KNOW, THE CASE OF FRANCE AND IN THE CASE OF BELGIUM, IT WAS SOMEWHAT OBVIOUS THAT THEY WANTED TO HAVE GENERAL DELEGATIONS THERE FOR CULTURAL REASONS WHICH ARE IN PART IN PROVINCIAL JURISDICTION. BUT THIS DOES NOT SEEM OBVIOUS WITH SENEGAL OR INDEED WITH FRENCH AFRICA GENERALLY; AND THERE DO NOT SEEM TO BE CULTURAL REASONS; THERE DO NOT SEEM TO BE TRADE REASONS; THERE DO NOT SEEM TO BE IMMIGRATION REASONS, AT LEAST REASONS OF A KIND THAT CAN'T BE DISCHARGED THROUGH AND WITH THE COOPERATION OF THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN DAKAR. SO WHAT OTHER MOTIVATIONS WOULD YOU SUPPOSE THEY HAVE IN GOING TO DAKAR? I SUSPECT IT MIGHT BE IN ORDER TO TRY TO CONVINCE SOME AFRICAN NATIONS THAT SEPARATISM IS A GOOD THING FOR THIS COUNTRY."

3. COMMENT: THE LETTER FROM JAMIESON TO MORIN WAS MODERATE IN TONE, BUT IN FACT IT CONSTITUTES A CLEAR, IF NOT FINAL, "NO" TO QUEBEC. FEDERAL OFFICIALS UNDOUBTEDLY REALIZE PQ GOVERNMENT WILL BE UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT OCCUPYING SPACE IN THE CANADIAN EMBASSY IN DAKAR. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE REASON FOR OTTAWA'S DECISION IS EVIDENT FROM TRUDEAU'S REMARK, I.E., THE SUSPICION BY THE GOC THAT THE PQ INTENDED TO USE ITS DELEGATION IN SENEGAL PRIMARILY FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES.

4. WE ARE NOT CONVINCED -- AT LEAST YET -- THAT THIS DECISION IS PART OF STRATEGY TO PROVOKE QUEBECOIS PRIOR TO FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN (QUEBEC 57). MINISTER OF SUPPLY AND SERVICES GOYER, WHO ALSO SERVES AS AN ADVISOR TO JAMIESON ON GOC RELATIONS WITH FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES, MENTIONED TO DCM THAT HE HAD BEEN URGING GOVERNMENT FOR LONG TIME TO TAKE HARD LINE ON PQ'S EFFORTS TO EXPAND ITS CONTACTS WITH FRENCH-SPEAKING AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS AND THAT, THEREFORE, HE WAS HIGHLY PLEASED BY THE DECISION REGARDING DAKAR. WE SUSPECT GOC WOULD HAVE MADE SAME DECISION REGARDLESS OF UPCOMING FEDERAL ELECTIONS. ENDERS

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